

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for making pallets from plant fibers comprising ~~the steps of:~~

preparing unwoven fabric of randomly tangled plant fibers;

impregnating the unwoven fabric with resin to provide a sheet of base material;

sandwiching and pressurizing the sheet of base material between upper and lower metal molds having a plurality of hot-air vents ~~made throughout their confronting areas,~~
providing the plurality of hot-air vents extending through the upper and lower molds such that the plurality of hot-air vents are spaced at regular intervals throughout substantially an entire confronting surface of the upper and lower molds; and

heating the sheet of base material ~~[[thus]]~~ sandwiched by hot air blowing from one to the other metal mold via the hot-air vents to shape the sheet of base material into a pallet with recesses formed on its surface ~~in consequence of~~ by the hot-air vents.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The method for making pallets according to claim 1, wherein the randomly tangled plant fibers are prepared by separating the plant fibers

from crushed shells of hard-shelled nut-like fruits ~~such as coconut shells and oily coconut shells~~, or from ~~certain plants such as jute~~.

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for making pallets comprising:

upper and lower metal molds confronting each other to define confronting areas;

a plurality of hot-air vents extending through the upper and lower molds, the plurality of hot-air vents are spaced at regular intervals throughout substantially the entire confronting areas ~~made throughout confronting areas of both the upper and lower metal molds~~; and

a hot-air ~~generating means~~ generator having a hot-air outlet and a hot-air inlet to which the hot-air vents of the upper and lower metal molds are connected respectively ~~and vice versa~~, thereby permitting hot air to circulate and pass through between the upper and lower metal molds via the hot-air vents to provide a pallet with recesses formed on its surface ~~in consequence of by~~ the hot-air vents.

4. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein additional hot-air vents are provided in a circumference of said the metal molds.

5. (New) The method for making pallets according to claim 2, wherein the hard-shelled nut-like fruits comprises at least one of coconut shells and oily coconut shells.

6. (New) The method for making pallets according to claim 2, wherein the tangled plant fibers are prepared by separating the plant fibers from jute.

7. (New) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising providing the upper and lower molds with corresponding through-holes in communication with the plurality of hot air vents, the corresponding through-holes having a diameter of approximately 1.0 cm.
- 8 (New) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein the upper and lower molds comprise through-holes in communication with the plurality of hot air vents, the corresponding through-holes having a diameter of approximately 1.0 cm.
- 9 (New) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising spacing the plurality of hot air vents at an interval of one hot air vent per 5 X 5 cm on the confronting surface.
10. (New) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein the plurality of hot air vents are spaced at an interval of one hot air vent per 5 X 5 cm on the confronting areas.
11. (New) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising providing circumferential extending hot air vents on a circumference of the upper and lower molds.
12. (New) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein the circumferential extending hot air vents are provided on a circumference of the upper and lower molds.